



# Children in Immigrant Families

A California Data Brief

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## California's Children Exemplify Our Nation's Rich Immigrant History

AMERICA HAS LONG BEEN DESCRIBED as a nation of immigrants, and California is most certainly a state of immigrants. Half of the state's children live in a family with at least one immigrant parent—two-and-a-half times the national rate. Statewide, about 4.8 million children, ages 0-17, live in an immigrant family. Among children in immigrant families, two-thirds (67%) are Latino, 14% are Asian and 10% are white.

Immigrant families have at least one foreign-born member.

85% of children in immigrant families are citizens.

This brief sheds new light on immigrant children and their families in California, challenging misinformed, negative stereotypes with the most current and accurate data available. The information presented also shows that, while many children in immigrant families are thriving, too many are struggling. Out of this knowledge new opportunities arise to ensure even greater success is achieved by this large subgroup of the state's population.

Key indicators representing the true experience of children in immigrant families in California include:

- 85% of children in immigrant families were born in the United States.
- Nearly three-quarters of children in immigrant families are fluent in two languages, and large numbers of students who are not yet fluent in English are mastering it.
- 54% of children in immigrant families live in low-income households.<sup>1</sup>
- Children in immigrant households are less likely than their peers to attend preschool or nursery school, and are less likely to attend high school.

Contra Costa, Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles and Sacramento counties are featured in this report. These counties have substantial numbers of immigrant families, are racially and ethnically diverse, and represent different regions of the state. Together, they provide a representative sample of the range of experience of immigrant families in California.

1. Families earning less than 200% of the federal poverty level (\$41,300 a year for a family of four).

## Almost All Children in Immigrant Families Are U.S. Citizens

**Why It Matters**—Half of California’s children live in an immigrant family, and millions more children live in communities deeply influenced by the immigrant experience, making biculturalism the norm in our state. In the future, California’s workforce will include a large number of second generation Americans.

**Key Findings**—Children’s citizenship rates are relatively consistent across most featured counties, ranging from 77% in Sacramento to 86% in Contra Costa County. California is the most common birthplace for children in immigrant families.

### Children in Immigrant Families’ U.S. Citizenship Status

County	All Children	Children in Immigrant Families	Children in Immigrant Families Who Are U.S. Citizens
<b>California</b>	<b>9,675,036</b>	<b>4,873,635</b>	<b>85%</b>
Sacramento	380,230	139,042	77%
Fresno	272,507	123,072	81%
Kern	232,985	95,842	84%
Contra Costa	264,205	106,690	86%
Los Angeles	2,734,823	1,737,509	87%

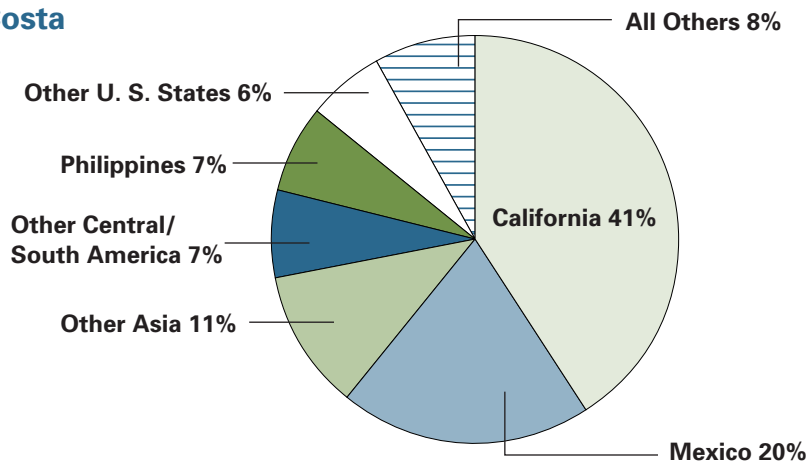
Source: Children Now analysis of 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata.

In each table in this brief, counties are ranked by primary indicator.<sup>2</sup>

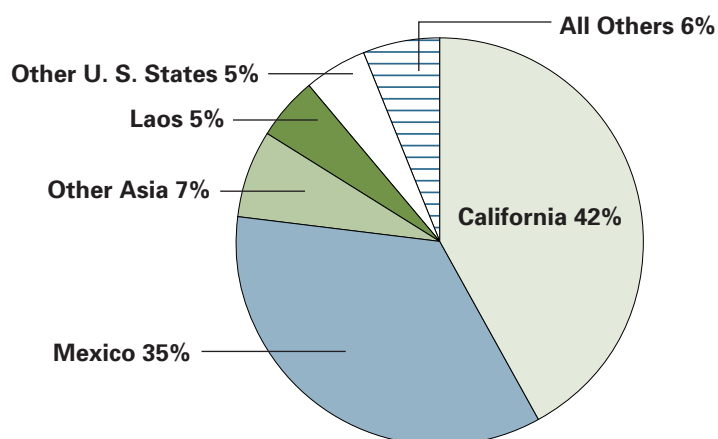
2. The primary indicator is the data element named in the title of each table. Counties are listed in order from lowest percentage to highest.

## Birthplace of Children in Immigrant Families<sup>3</sup>

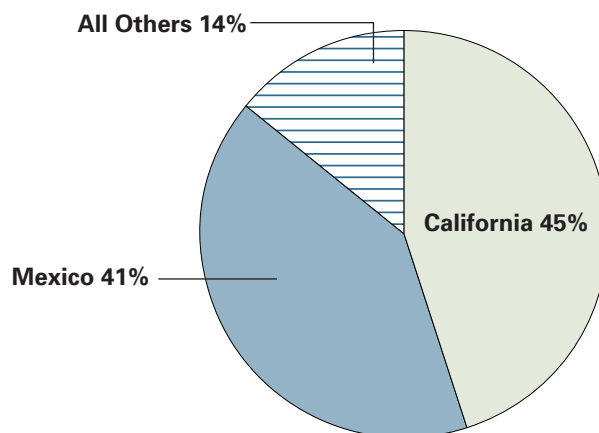
### Contra Costa



### Fresno



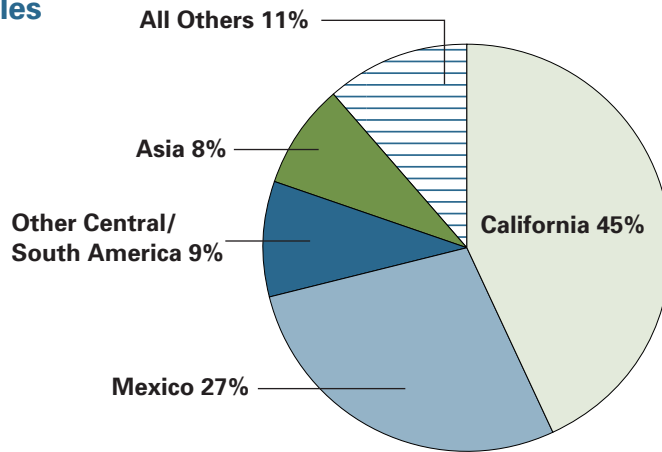
### Kern



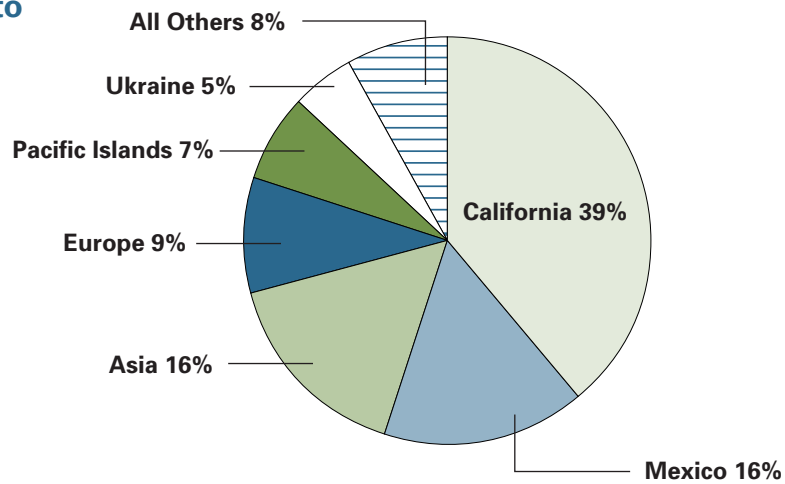
3. Specific state or country of birth is listed for sub-populations of 5% or greater. Smaller sub-populations are consolidated by region. Many foreign-born children in immigrant families have become U.S. citizens, explaining the difference between percentages of children born abroad and children who are U.S. citizens.

## Birthplace of Children in Immigrant Families<sup>3</sup>

### Los Angeles



### Sacramento



Source: Children Now analysis of 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata.

3. Specific state or country of birth is listed for sub-populations of 5% or greater. Smaller sub-populations are consolidated by region. Many foreign-born children in immigrant families have become U.S. citizens, explaining the difference between percentages of children born abroad and children who are U.S. citizens.

## Three-Quarters of Children in Immigrant Families Are Bilingual

**Why It Matters**—Children who speak two languages are a valuable resource to our rapidly-globalizing economy, since California’s future economic strength depends, in part, on our ability to compete in the international marketplace.

**Key Findings**—Statewide, 80% of children, ages 5-17, in immigrant families speak a language other than English at home; nearly three-fourths are fluent in two languages. Across the state, Spanish, Vietnamese and Chinese are the most common non-English languages spoken at home.

### Language Ability of Children in Immigrant Families

County	Children in Immigrant Families (Ages 5-17)	Children Who Speak Another Language at Home	Children Who Speak Two Languages Well	Most Common Non-English Home Languages*
<b>California</b>	<b>3,476,655</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>Spanish (61%), Chinese (4%), Vietnamese (2%), Korean (2%), Tagalog (2%)</b>
Contra Costa	75,311	67%	63%	Spanish (46%), Chinese (5%), Tagalog (3%), Farsi (2%), French (1%)
Sacramento	96,184	79%	73%	Spanish (33%), Russian (10%), Hmong (7%), Vietnamese (5%), Punjabi (3%)
Kern	67,273	86%	74%	Spanish (82%), Tagalog (2%), Vietnamese (1%), Punjabi (1%), Hindi (<1%)
Los Angeles	1,252,757	83%	77%	Spanish (67%), Chinese (3%), Korean (2%), Armenian (2%), Tagalog (2%)
Fresno	89,231	88%	79%	Spanish (63%), Hmong (13%), Laotian (4%), Khmer (2%), Punjabi (1%)

**73% of children in immigrant families speak more than one language.**

\* Five most common non-English home languages

Source: Children Now analysis of 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata.

## 1.4 Million Children in California Live with Adults Who Don't Speak English

**Why It Matters**—Children who grow up in linguistically-isolated households are less likely to speak English well themselves, which translates to more time spent mastering English skills in school, limiting their capacity to learn other subjects. Children of non-English-speaking parents do worse in school and are more likely to drop out.<sup>4</sup>

**Key Findings**—More than one-quarter of immigrant households in California are linguistically-isolated. Households in Fresno and Kern counties are especially likely to lack an adult who speaks English well. Most children in linguistically-isolated households were born in California.

### Linguistically-Isolated Households with Children

County	Immigrant Households with Children	Immigrant Households That Are Linguistically-Isolated	Birthplaces of Children in Linguistically-Isolated Households*
<b>California</b>	<b>2,163,242</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>California (76%), Mexico (15%), Korea (1%), El Salvador (1%), Philippines (1%)</b>
Contra Costa	52,064	20%	California (76%), Mexico (16%), El Salvador (2%), Nicaragua (1%), Japan (1%)
Sacramento	60,150	29%	California (61%), Mexico (13%), Ukraine (10%), Belarus (5%), Vietnam (2%)
Los Angeles	745,150	30%	California (79%), Mexico (12%), Korea (1%), Guatemala (1%), El Salvador (1%)
Fresno	51,158	35%	California (66%), Mexico (20%), Oregon (2%), Thailand (2%), Illinois (1%)
Kern	39,449	38%	California (76%), Mexico (18%), El Salvador (1%), Vietnam (1%)

Linguistically-isolated households have no adults who speak English well.

\* Five most common places of birth.

Source: Children Now analysis of 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata.

4. Hoyt Bleakley and Aimee Chin, *What Holds Back the Second Generation? The Intergenerational Transmission of Language Human Capital Among Immigrants* (San Diego: Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, UC San Diego, 2004).



## Adults in Immigrant Families Have Less Formal Education

**Why It Matters**—Parents with limited formal education are more likely to raise children who will grow up in low-income families, since income tends to vary with educational attainment. Further, children of parents who did not complete high school are less likely to earn a diploma.<sup>5</sup>

**Key Findings**—Statewide, immigrant adults are three times more likely to have less than 12 years of schooling than non-immigrant adults. Among featured counties, nearly half of adults in immigrant families in Fresno and Kern counties have fewer than 12 years of schooling. Immigrant adults in Contra Costa have the highest levels of formal schooling.

### Adults with Fewer Than 12 Years of Schooling

County	Adults in Immigrant Households		Adults in Non-Immigrant Households	
	All Adults	Percent with Fewer than 12 Years of Schooling	All Adults	Percent with Fewer than 12 Years of Schooling
<b>California</b>	<b>10,590,441</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>15,075,089</b>	<b>8%</b>
Contra Costa	258,843	18%	480,207	5%
Sacramento	277,171	22%	690,438	8%
Los Angeles	3,834,264	32%	3,200,700	9%
Kern	159,254	46%	333,919	13%
Fresno	206,055	47%	385,856	13%

About one-third of adults in immigrant families attended fewer than 12 years of school.

Source: Children Now analysis of 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata.

5. Melanie Guldi et al., “The Effects of Family Background on Young Adult Children’s Success,” *Network on Transitions to Adulthood Policy Brief* 29 (September 2006): 2.

## Children in Immigrant Families Are Less Likely to Attend Preschool

**Why It Matters**—Children who have enriching early childhood learning and development experiences do better in school, are more likely to graduate and are more likely to be employed later in life. Attending a high-quality nursery school or preschool is one of the best ways for children in immigrant families to overcome barriers to success.

**Key Findings**—Nearly 60% of 3- and 4-year-olds in immigrant households do not attend preschool, compared to about half of children in non-immigrant households. Among featured counties, children in Fresno, Kern and Sacramento are least likely to be enrolled in preschool, regardless of their family's citizenship status.

### Preschool Enrollment for 3- and 4-Year-Olds

	Immigrant Households		Non-immigrant Households	
	All 3- and 4-Year-Olds	Enrolled in Preschool*	All 3- and 4-Year-Olds	Enrolled in Preschool*
<b>California</b>	<b>590,592</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>513,388</b>	<b>51%</b>
Kern	11,232	21%	13,782	41%
Sacramento	20,969	28%	24,897	44%
Fresno	14,496	32%	15,034	41%
Los Angeles	204,537	44%	110,431	53%
Contra Costa	13,667	55%	15,609	63%

\* Includes children who attend nursery school, preschool or kindergarten.

Source: Children Now analysis of 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata.

Nearly 60% of 3- and 4-year-olds in immigrant households do not attend preschool.

## One-Quarter of California's Students Have Yet to Master English

**Why It Matters**—While learning a new language, English Learners (ELs) have less time and ability in school to devote to learning other academic subjects and befriending English-speaking classmates. As a result, EL students are at risk for poorer academic performance and isolation from their peers.

**Key Findings**—One-quarter of California's students are English Learners—about five times the national rate. Over time, the percentage of English Learners has remained relatively constant. In 2006, Los Angeles had the highest percentage of EL students among featured counties (and one of the highest rates statewide), while Contra Costa had the lowest.

### English Learners in California Schools

	2002	2004	2006
<b>California</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>25%</b>
Contra Costa	14%	15%	16%
Sacramento	20%	19%	19%
Kern	21%	20%	21%
Fresno	28%	27%	26%
Los Angeles	33%	34%	31%

Source: California Department of Education enrollment data.

Most English Learner students are part of an immigrant family.

## More California Students Are Mastering English than Before

**Why It Matters**—Redesignated students have become fluent in English, as measured by test scores and teacher evaluations, marking a substantial step toward acquiring the skills needed to succeed. As larger numbers of EL students are redesignated, more students are able to fully participate in school. In 2006, about 18% of all California students had mastered English as a second language.<sup>6</sup>

**Key Findings**—The percentage of redesignated English Learners has increased statewide from roughly 8% in the 2001-02 school year to 10% in 2006. Among featured counties, Fresno, Los Angeles and Sacramento are redesignating a greater percentage of English Learners than in the past, while Contra Costa and Kern are redesignating fewer.

### Annual Redesignation Rates for English Learners

	2002	2004	2006
California	8%	8%	10%
Contra Costa	9%	9%	7%
Fresno	5%	7%	8%
Sacramento	6%	10%	9%
Los Angeles	9%	7%	10%
Kern	12%	13%	11%

Source: California Department of Education enrollment data.

Learning English is one of the best ways for newcomer students to succeed in school, since students who have mastered English can take advantage of the most rigorous coursework.

6. The overall percentage of redesignated students is not simply a sum of the percent redesignated each year, since new students enter the system and others graduate.

## English Learners Are Less Likely to Meet California's Academic Achievement Standards

**Why It Matters**—Students who meet the state's academic proficiency standards on the California Standards Test have achieved basic educational goals, are more likely to graduate, and are better prepared to participate fully in school and to make informed choices about their futures.

**Key Findings**—Statewide, only 42% of second- through 11th-graders meet state proficiency targets in English Language Arts. English Learners fare even worse than their peers. Students who have been redesignated as fluent in English perform best, better even than students whose primary language is English.

Similarly, only 37% of all Californian students meet state proficiency targets in Math. English Learners are even less likely meet these targets than their peers.

### Students at Grade Level in English Language Arts

Just one in 10 English Learners is at grade level in English Language Arts, and only one in five is at grade level in Math.

	All Students	English Is Primary Language	English Learner	Redesignated Fluent in English
<b>California</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>55%</b>
Kern	33%	40%	8%	38%
Fresno	35%	44%	11%	48%
Los Angeles	37%	46%	11%	53%
Contra Costa	51%	58%	11%	59%
Sacramento	44%	48%	16%	67%

Source: Children Now analysis of California Department of Education California Standards Test results.

### Students at Grade Level in Math

	All Students	English Is Primary Language	English Learner	Redesignated Fluent in English
<b>California</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>39%</b>
Fresno	25%	30%	10%	29%
Contra Costa	41%	43%	14%	37%
Kern	27%	31%	14%	27%
Sacramento	38%	39%	18%	48%
Los Angeles	33%	36%	19%	35%

Source: Children Now analysis of California Department of Education California Standards Test results.

## English Learners Are Less Likely to Pass the California High School Exit Exam

**Why It Matters**—Beginning with the Class of 2006, high school students must pass both the Math and English sections of the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) to receive a diploma. Most students pass this test in the 10th grade; students who do not pass as sophomores are much less likely to pass the test and therefore are less likely to graduate.

**Key Findings**—In 2006, about three-quarters of California's 10th-graders passed at least one section of the CAHSEE, showing that they have learned important skills that will benefit them in school and the workplace. English Learners are about half as likely to pass either the Math or English sections of the test. Redesignated students have the highest overall passage rates.

### 10th-Graders Who Passed the English Exit Exam

	All Students	English Is Primary Language	English Learner	Redesignated Fluent in English
<b>California</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>89%</b>
Kern	71 %	75 %	25 %	81 %
Los Angeles	73 %	79 %	36 %	88 %
Fresno	72 %	78 %	37 %	92 %
Contra Costa	83 %	87 %	40 %	93 %
Sacramento	78 %	81 %	49 %	97 %

Source: Children Now analysis of California Department of Education California Standards Test results.

### 10th-Graders Who Passed the Math Exit Exam

	All Students	English Is Primary Language	English Learner	Redesignated Fluent in English
<b>California</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>85%</b>
Kern	70 %	72 %	40 %	78 %
Los Angeles	70 %	73 %	43 %	82 %
Contra Costa	81 %	83 %	48 %	90 %
Fresno	70 %	73 %	48 %	87 %
Sacramento	76 %	76 %	58 %	95 %

Source: Children Now analysis of California Department of Education CAHSEE results.

Students who pass the CAHSEE in the 10th grade are more likely to graduate.

## 15- to 17-Year-Olds in Immigrant Families Are Slightly Less Likely to Be in School

**Why It Matters**—Children who do not finish high school earn less and are more likely to experience substantial social challenges throughout their lifetime. The number of 15- to 17-year-olds who are not enrolled in school is correlated with the number of children who are unlikely to graduate high school without additional support.

**Key Findings**—Children in immigrant families are more likely to be out of school than their peers. Non-attendance rates for children, ages 15-17, are too high, since all children this age are expected to attend school. Kern has the highest rates of out-of-school children among featured counties. In Sacramento, however, children in immigrant families are less likely to be out of school than their peers.

### Children, Ages 15-17, Who Are Not in School

	Immigrant Households		Non-Immigrant Households	
	15- to 17-Year-Olds	Not in School	15- to 17-Year-Olds	Not in School
<b>California</b>	<b>756,015</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>818,911</b>	<b>3%</b>
Sacramento	23,776	2%	39,498	3%
Fresno	20,615	3%	24,115	1%
Contra Costa	16,455	4%	30,409	2%
Los Angeles	259,408	4%	165,528	4%
Kern	16,053	13%	24,793	7%

Teens in immigrant families are more likely to be out of school than their peers.

Source: Children Now analysis of 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata.

## Prenatal Care Rates Are High for Immigrant And Non-Immigrant Mothers

**Why It Matters**—Babies born to mothers who receive early prenatal care are less likely to be stillborn or suffer from costly and debilitating medical conditions, such as low birthweight and developmental delays.

**Key Findings**—Statewide, about 86% of expectant mothers benefit from early prenatal care. Mothers in immigrant families are less likely to receive early prenatal care in Contra Costa and Sacramento, and more likely to receive early prenatal care in Los Angeles, reflecting the success of multiple initiatives to encourage pregnant women to begin care early.

### Babies Benefiting from Early Prenatal Care

	Immigrant Mothers		Non-Immigrant Mothers	
	Babies Born	Receiving Early Prenatal Care	Babies Born	Receiving Early Prenatal Care
California	254,478	86%	291,836	87%
Sacramento	7,425	78%	13,583	83%
Kern*	4,975	79%	8,511	80%
Contra Costa	5,379	83%	7,642	91%
Fresno*	6,184	86%	9,708	86%
Los Angeles	82,380	92%	67,430	90%

\* No statistically-significant difference in early prenatal care rates between immigrant and non-immigrant mothers.

Source: Children Now analysis of California Department of Health Services 2005 Public Use Birth File.

About 86% of mothers in California receive early prenatal care, regardless of their immigration status.



## Children of Immigrants Are Less Likely to Be in Good Health

**Why It Matters**—Healthy children are more likely to arrive at school ready to learn, attend class regularly and participate in enriching extracurricular activities. Healthy children are also more likely to be healthy as adults.

**Key Findings**—Statewide, only about half of children of immigrant fathers are in good health, as reported by their parents, compared to three-quarters of children of non-immigrant fathers. Among featured counties, children in immigrant families in Fresno and Kern are least likely to be in good health.

### Children in Good Health

County	Children of Immigrant Fathers	Children of Non-Immigrant Fathers
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>76%</b>
Fresno	32%	72%
Kern	42%	75%
Contra Costa	51%	83%
Los Angeles	52%	74%
Sacramento	55%	79%

Only about half of children in immigrant families are in good health, compared to three-quarters of their peers.

Source: 2005 California Health Interview Survey.

## Children of Immigrants Are Less Likely to Have Health Insurance

**Why It Matters**—Children without health insurance are less likely to have a regular source of medical care, tend to delay seeking care for illnesses and are less likely to be vaccinated. As a result, uninsured children miss more school due to illness and often must rely on expensive emergency room care for preventable conditions.

**Key Findings**—Almost all of California’s children have health insurance, though children of immigrant fathers are less likely to be insured than children of fathers born in the U.S., even though most of these children are eligible for coverage. Among featured counties, statistically-significant differences in insurance rates exist only in Los Angeles.

### Children Who Are Insured

County	Children of Immigrant Fathers	Children of Non-Immigrant Fathers
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>97%</b>
Contra Costa*	88%	98%
Fresno*	91%	98%
Kern*	83%	91%
Los Angeles	90%	98%
Sacramento*	93%	97%

\* Difference in insurance rates is not statistically-significant.

Source: 2005 California Health Interview Survey.

**90% of children in immigrant households have insurance, compared to 97% of their peers.**

## Immigrant Families Are More Likely to Live in Poverty

**Why It Matters**—Children who live in low-income families are more likely than their peers to go hungry, get sick, not have a family physician and demonstrate below average academic achievement.

**Key Findings**—Statewide, about 40% of immigrant families earn less than twice the federal poverty level—one and a half times the rate for non-immigrant families. Poverty is nearly twice as prevalent among immigrant households in Fresno and Kern as in other featured counties.

### Low-Income Households\*

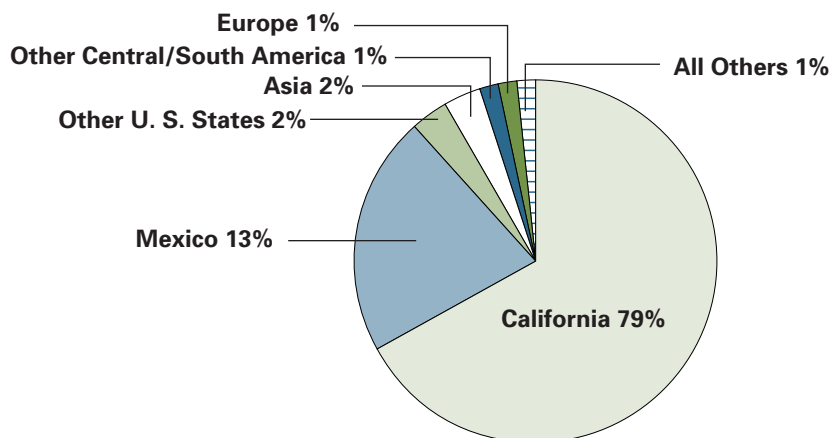
About 40% of immigrant households are low-income.

County	All Low-Income Households	Immigrant Households That Are Low-Income	Non-Immigrant Households That Are Low-Income
<b>California</b>	<b>3,622,815</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>25%</b>
Contra Costa	68,817	22%	18%
Sacramento	141,353	40%	25%
Los Angeles	1,116,408	44%	27%
Fresno	113,480	57%	35%
Kern	96,341	60%	36%

\* Households earning less than 200% of the federal poverty level.

Source: Children Now analysis of 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata.

### Birthplace of Children in Low-Income Immigrant Families



Source: Children Now analysis of 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata.

## Immigrant Families Are More Likely to Receive Food Stamps

**Why It Matters**—Malnutrition and hunger can negatively affect children's physical health and development. Children who go hungry may experience developmental delays and poor academic performance. Households that receive food stamps are among the most food insecure, though thousands more families not receiving food stamps also struggle to afford enough food.

**Key Findings**—About 6% of immigrant households and 4% of non-immigrant households receive food stamps statewide. Among featured counties, immigrant families are more likely to receive food stamps in Fresno and Sacramento.

### Households with Children That Receive Food Stamps

County	Households That Receive Food Stamps	Immigrant Households That Receive Food Stamps	Non-Immigrant Households That Receive Food Stamps
<b>California</b>	<b>544,956</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Contra Costa	9,806	4%	9%
Los Angeles	131,072	10%	12%
Kern	20,538	19%	20%
Sacramento	29,309	20%	14%
Fresno	27,147	27%	18%

Source: Children Now analysis of 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata.

**6% of immigrant families receive food stamps in California.**

## Immigrant Households Are More Likely to Be Overcrowded

**Why It Matters**—Children living in overcrowded households may not have a dedicated place to complete their homework or quiet hours for sleeping, which can negatively affect their school performance and health. Moreover, overcrowding is one measure of housing instability, which may lead to frequent moves or homelessness, both of which seriously impede children’s health and academic success.

**Key Findings**—Overcrowding is common in California’s immigrant households. Statewide, 18% of immigrant households have more than one person per room—about six times as many as non-immigrant households. Immigrant households in Los Angeles, Kern and Fresno are particularly likely to be overcrowded among featured counties, a trend reflected in overcrowding rates for all households.

### Overcrowded Households

County	All	Immigrant Households That Are Overcrowded	Non-Immigrant Households That Are Overcrowded
California	970,976	18%	3%
Contra Costa	10,193	7%	1%
Sacramento	20,262	10%	2%
Kern	18,140	19%	4%
Fresno	26,128	23%	4%
Los Angeles	403,078	23%	4%

Immigrant families are six times more likely to live in overcrowded housing.

Source: Children Now analysis of 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata.

## Almost All Immigrant Parents Work, But Earn Much Less than Non-Immigrant Parents

**Why It Matters**—Children of employed adults are more likely to work later in life. Further, parents' labor force participation shows a commitment to supporting the U.S. economy and providing for one's family.

**Key Findings**—Parents' workforce participation is high in California. Caregivers in immigrant and non-immigrant households have similar employment rates statewide and within counties. Immigrant households, however, earn about one-third less than non-immigrant households statewide.

### Parent Employment and Earnings

County	Immigrant Households		Non-Immigrant Households	
	With a Working Parent	Median Household Income	With a Working Parent	Median Household Income
<b>California</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>\$55,008</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>\$77,419</b>
Fresno	83%	\$40,543	88%	\$63,667
Kern	86%	\$36,672	87%	\$54,906
Los Angeles	88%	\$48,896	88%	\$74,159
Sacramento	92%	\$52,054	89%	\$70,594
Contra Costa	95%	\$81,493	90%	\$101,663

Source: Children Now analysis of 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata.

**Immigrant households earn about one-third less than non-immigrant households.**

## Definitions and Sources

This brief focuses on the well-being of children in immigrant families. Due to limitations of the data, our means of identifying immigrant families vary. When possible, immigrant families are identified based on the citizenship status of parents and children. We use English Learner student data for many education measures, since test scores for children in immigrant families are not available from the California Department of Education. Similarly, some children's health status indicators are based on a parent's birthplace or citizenship status.

**Immigrant Families:** Households with one or more immigrant member in the immediate family (i.e., adult caregivers and dependent children). Immigrant families were identified by the citizenship status of the household head, spouse and children for primary households, and by the citizenship status of all members of non-primary households. "Immigrant" is defined as any foreign-born person, except individuals born abroad of American parents. Children Now analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), as accessed through IPUMS, a project of the Minnesota Population Center, <<http://www.ipums.org/acs/index.shtml>> (January 26, 2007).

**Birthplace:** Birthplace is based on Census data for the state or country in which a person was born. When appropriate, place of birth is consolidated by region. Children Now analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata Sample.

**Languages Spoken by Children in Immigrant Households:** Children, ages 5-17, in immigrant families who speak another language at home. Bilingual children are defined as those who speak another language at home and also speak English "well" or "very well." Children Now analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata Sample.

**Children Living with Adults Who Do Not Speak English:** Linguistically-isolated households are those in which every person, 14 years and older, has difficulty speaking English or does not speak English at all. Table shows the number of immigrant households with children that are linguistically-isolated. Children Now analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata Sample.

**Adults with 12 Years of Education or Less:** Adults, ages 18 and older, who attended 11 or fewer years of school. Children Now analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata Sample.

**Children's Preschool Enrollment:** 3- and 4-year-olds who do not attend nursery school, preschool or kindergarten as a percentage of all 3- and 4-year-olds. Children Now analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata Sample.

**English Learners in Public Schools:** California's public school districts determine whether a student is an English Learner, relying on standardized test scores and teacher evaluations. California Department of Education, Educational Demographics Unit, "English Learners: Number and Percent of Enrollment, 2005-06," 2006.

**Redesignated English Learners:** California's public school districts determine whether a student has mastered English, relying on standardized test scores and teacher evaluations. The percent reported is the proportion of a county's English Learner population who were redesignated during the school year. California Department of Education, Educational Demographics Unit, "English Learners: Number and Percent of Enrollment, 2005-06," 2006.

**English Is Primary Language:** Children who speak English as a first language or who speak only English.

**Students at State Targets in English Language Arts:** Students who score at Proficient or Advanced levels on the California Standards Test (CST) are meeting state targets. Children Now analysis of data from the California Department of Education, Testing and Accountability Department, "2005-06 STAR Testing Research Files," September 22, 2006, <<http://star.cde.ca.gov/star2006/viewreport.asp?rf=True&ps=True>> (February 21, 2007).

**Students at State Targets in Math:** Students who scored at Proficient or Advanced levels on the California Standards Test (CST) as a percentage of all students who took the test. Children Now analysis of data from the California Department of Education, Testing and Accountability Department, "2005-06 STAR Testing Research Files," September 22, 2006, <<http://star.cde.ca.gov/star2006/viewreport.asp?rf=True&ps=True>> (February 21, 2007).



**High School Exit Exam Passage Rates:** Students who passed either the English Language Arts or Math sections of the CAHSEE in 10th grade as a percentage of all 10th-graders who took the test. Children Now analysis of data from the California Department of Education, Testing and Accountability Department, “2005-06 CAHSEE Testing Research Files,” August 22, 2006, <<http://cahsee.cde.ca.gov/datafiles.asp>> (February 26, 2007).

**15- to 17-Year-Olds Who Are Not in School:** Children, ages 15-17, who have less than 12 years of education and have not attended school in the last three months. Children Now analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata Sample.

**Early Prenatal Care:** Mothers who saw a doctor during the first three months of pregnancy. Immigrant status is determined by mother’s country of birth; all foreign-born mothers are considered immigrants. Children Now analysis of California Department of Health Services, Center for Health Statistics, “Birth Public Use File,” 2005.


**Children in “Very Good” or “Excellent” Health:** Parent survey results for children, ages 0-18, of non-citizen fathers, the closest proxy for an immigrant household available. UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, 2005 California Health Interview Survey, “Child’s Health Status.”

**Children with Health Insurance:** Parent survey results for children, ages 0-18, of non-citizen fathers, the closest proxy for an immigrant household available. UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, 2005 California Health Interview Survey, “Currently Insured.”

**Low-Income Households:** Households with earnings at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. Children Now analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata Sample.

**Households with Children That Receive Food Stamps:** Households with children that report receiving food stamps. Children Now analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata Sample.

**Overcrowded Households:** Households with more than one person per room. For example, a family with two children, two parents and three rooms would be considered overcrowded by this commonly-applied method. Children Now analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata Sample.



**Households with at Least One Working Parent:** Households with at least one parent in the labor force. Children Now analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata Sample.

**Median Household Income:** Median income is calculated using the total household income variable, which includes all reported sources of income, and is reported for families with at least one parent in the labor force. Children Now analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2005 American Community Survey 1% Public Use Microdata Sample.

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